

Working for America Act

Guiding Principles

1. American citizens expect the Federal Government to achieve results.

The goals of individual employees must be tied in a meaningful way to agency missions. Individuals deserve to know how their performance contributes to that mission.

2. Those results are achieved by people who comprise the Federal workforce.

3. We need a personnel system that creates an environment where employees have the greatest opportunity to reach their full potential.

Individual employees should be provided:

- clear performance goals,
- managers who can help them be successful, and
- pay based on merit and market

4. A system that values performance and potential must also ensure accountability. The public expects it, as do Federal employees.

The Federal Human Capital Survey reveals that only 27 percent of Federal employees believe steps are taken to deal with poor performers and only 29 percent believe differences in performance are recognized in a meaningful way.

5. An employee's career (and pay) potential should recognize achievement and not be determined by the passage of time or obsolete job classifications.

It takes 18 years for a new employee to reach the top of a GS pay grade, regardless of how well they perform.

GS pay grades were defined by a law that has remained largely unchanged since the middle of the last century and were designed for a workforce that is obsolete.

6. Any enhancements to the personnel system must be made within the context of the core values, principles, and protections of the American civil service

Reform can be accomplished while fully preserving core principles and protections. Making needed enhancements promotes merit system principles by extending them to how pay decisions are made.

7. No agency should be at a competitive disadvantage in hiring due to limited availability of reforms.

The personnel systems that make it more likely that employees reach their full potential will soon cover over half of the Federal workforce. The remainder should be afforded similar opportunities.

8. Managers should be given the tools to be good leaders and held accountable for results.

Managers must be trained, provided with the tools and be held accountable to lead. Proposed reforms will ensure managers are equipped to develop and lead employees.

9. Implementation of the new systems at agencies will occur only upon certification.

OPM will be charged with ensuring an agency is ready before it can utilize the flexibilities in the bill and certifying its readiness.